WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A multi-function image processing apparatus (MFP), comprising:

a system controller communicatively coupled to a network, the system controller configured to receive a network image processing job sent over the network by a network requesting device and configured to control operation of the MFP;

an image recorder configured to receive image data and print documents using the image data;

a scanner configured to scan a document and provide scan data as a result;

an image processor communicatively coupled with the scanner and configured to receive the scan data from the scanner, to perform image processing on the scan data to provide image-processed data, and to output the image-processed data to the image recorder; and

an interface unit configured to transfer image data between the image processor and the system controller in a first mode of operation of the MFP,

wherein the image processor comprises:

a first FIFO communicatively coupled to the system controller and that is configured to receive network image data for the network image processing job to be image-processed in a second mode of operation of the MFP, wherein the network image processing job communicated from the system controller to the image processor bypasses the interface unit; and

a second FIFO communicatively coupled to the system controller and that is configured to send network image-processed data of the network image processing job to the system controller, wherein the network image-processed data communicated from the image processor to the system controller bypasses the interface unit.

2.   The MFP according to claim 1, further comprising:

a first memory communicatively coupled to the interface unit, the first memory configured to temporarily store image data, and to provide the image data to the image processor in the first mode of operation of the MFP.

3.   The MFP according to claim 2, further comprising:

a second memory communicatively coupled to the system control unit, the second memory configured to temporarily store image-processed data that has been scanned by the scanner and that has been image processed by the image processing unit in the first mode of operation.

4.   The MFP according to claim 2, wherein one line of data is clocked into said first FIFO during one clock cycle, and wherein one line of data is clocked out of said second FIFO during one clock cycle.

5.   The MFP according to claim 3, wherein said second memory is capable of storing image-processed data that has been received over said

network by said system controller and that has been image processed by said image processor.

6. The MFP according to claim 1, wherein said image processor operates on a clock that also controls latching of data into and out of said first and second FIFOs.

7. An image processing method for a multi-function image processing apparatus (MFP) that is coupled to a network, the method comprising:

a) receiving a local image processing request, the local image processing request not being received by way of the network;

b) processing the local image processing request;

c) receiving a network image processing request sent over the network while the MFP is processing the local image processing request;

d) denying the network image processing request;

e) completing the local image processing request started in step b); and

f) placing the MFP in a mode that is capable of accepting a new processing request, wherein the new processing request may be either another local image processing request, the network image processing request denied in step d), or another network image processing request.

8.   The method according to claim 7, wherein the local image processing request is at least one of a copy, scan or print request.

9.   The method according to claim 8, wherein the network image processing job request denied in the step d) is stored in a memory, and is performed by the MFP as a first job request after the local image processing request has been completed.

10.   The method according to claim 8, wherein, when the MFP is processing the first job request and another local image processing request, not sent over the network, is received by the MFP, the method further comprising:

g)   temporarily halting processing of the first job request and storing data regarding the processing of the first job request in memory;

h)   processing the another local image processing request to completion; and

i)   completing the first job request from a point where the first job request was halted in step g).

11.   An image processing method for a multi-function image processing apparatus (MFP) that is coupled to a network, the method comprising:

a)   receiving a network image processing request sent over a network;

b)   processing the network image processing request;

c)   receiving a local image processing request, not sent over the network, while the network image processing request is still being processed;

d)   temporarily halting processing of the network image processing request;

e)   processing the local image processing request to completion; and

f)   continuing processing of the network image processing job request from a point where the network image processing request was halted in step d).

12.   The method according to claim 11, wherein the step of processing the network image processing request comprises using an image processor that comprises a first FIFO that receives network image data of the network processing request and a second FIFO that sends network image-processed data, and

wherein the step of temporarily halting processing of the network image processing request comprises halting a clock provided to the first FIFO and the second FIFO.

13.   The method according to claim 11, wherein the local image processing request utilizes an interface unit to transfer data between components of the MFP, and wherein the network image processing request does not utilize the interface unit to transfer data between components of the MFP.

14. The method according to claim 13, wherein the local image processing request does not utilize the first and second FIFOs of the image processor for image data transfer to and from the image processor.

15. The method according to claim 13, wherein the network image processed data is temporarily stored in a memory of the MFP before being transferred over the network to a device that initiated the network image processing request.